

Community Affairs Legislation Committee

The committee met on Thursday, 26 February 2015 from 9 am until 11 pm.

The committee called:

- the Department and agencies of the Human Services portfolio, including Australian Hearing, and
- the Department and agencies of the Social Services portfolio, including the Aged Care Quality Agency and the National Disability Insurance Agency.

Among other issues, the following matters were discussed:

- the scoping study for the privatisation of Australian Hearing,
- the conduct and progress of negotiations for a new enterprise agreement for the Department of Human Services (DHS),
- the role of DHS in emergency services following natural disasters,
- resources devoted to legal actions seeking to recover child support payments (with reference to a reported case),
- the grant selection processes with a focus on emergency relief,
- housing grants and the government's decision not to continue with the next round,
- new accommodation for the Department of Social Services (DSS) in Tuggeranong and when construction will commence,
- the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness and whether funding would be restored; and staffing in the Housing and Homelessness area,
- the time taken to respond to questions on notice,
- the implementation of a mobile workforce of clinicians (flying squads) providing advice to residential aged care providers for residents with the most severe behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia,
- the audit undertaken by the Aged Care Quality Agency of the Kepnock Grove aged care facility and what compliance measures are in place,
- the National Disability Insurance Scheme, including transition arrangements and bilateral agreements with states; providers withdrawing from the provision of existing services and progress on the Northern Territory trial site,
- the cancellation of the Stronger Relationships trial,
- the income management program,
- changes to paid parental leave policy,
- the status of the support to trafficked people program,
- the development of updated multicultural policy,
- the selection and entitlements of members of the Australian Multicultural Council,
- the role of DSS role in countering violent extremism,
- the content and implementation of the McClure Report,
- the implementation of the family package announced by government,

- participation changes in the disability support pension,
- the cancellation of payments to foreign fighters, and
- the implementation of the Earn or Learn program.